

Maxwell's Crossing

A LITERARY AND FINE ARTS PUBLICATION PRESENTED BY THE *Shelton State Courier*



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December 16th 2000



Jessica Burt

By Jessica Burt

Tornadoes are not uncommon to the Tuscaloosa area. For years when the weather is bad, we have all learned how to take cover and find immediate shelter when faced with the scary situation. Unfortunately, no matter how great the warning, people do not always get to shelter in time. In some cases if they do find shelter, it is not always going to withstand the massive destruction tornadoes

cause.

I woke for work at six in the morning; this was my weekend to work, so I didn't have to take Madison to school. She would be staying home with Philip. So I got an extra hour of sleep, as opposed to weekdays when I had to wake up at five. I went through my routine of getting ready. I grabbed my purse and keys and strolled out the door. I noticed it was unusually warm for a December morning. I thought immediately that this was tornado weather, but I dismissed the thought, thinking tornadoes don't strike this time of year. I had no idea what was in store for me on that day.

I pulled into the hospital parking lot, dreading all of the work that would be waiting on me upstairs. The elevator carried me to the second floor. I scurried down the hall about fifty yards, trying not to be

late. The radiology sign greeted me as I made a right into the department where I worked. Co-workers smiled and said their good mornings and hellos as they sipped their freshly brewed coffee. I marched into the file room ready to begin work. Stacks of films were laying around waiting to be put into place, reports were scattered about needing to be put with the films. The radio played softly in the background.

The day went on as usual. I was going about my daily routine when suddenly a public service announcement interrupted the regularly scheduled programming on the radio.

"We have a tornado warning in effect for Tuscaloosa

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Finding Myself

A Biographical Essay

By Carlton Robertson

As a poor black male growing up in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, living on Jackson Avenue, I was never truly happy with the color of my skin. Sometimes it takes an accident or a life shattering event to change the course of our lives, and that is exactly what happened to me. Being tragically burned at a very young age charted a new course for my life.

I can remember the old brown wooden shot gun house my family lived in. It was called a shot gun house because if you opened the front and back door at the same time a shot could be fired through the front door and go straight out the back.

The house only had three bedrooms, which I shared with my parents and seven



Carlton Robertson

other siblings.

I didn't like myself much at the time. Being the darkest person in my family was really hard. All of my sisters and brothers had light to medium brown skin tones. As a matter of fact, I was the darkest person in the neighborhood.

I have memories of being made fun of quite often. People would call me names

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Painting by
Adam Lucas

Painting by
Yvonne Simpson
oil on canvas



Painting
by
Jack
Cousette
acrylic on
canvas

"Starry
Night 2003"

Painting by
Elizabeth
Jones

acrylic on
canvas



Painting by
Heather Curry

Inside The Crossing

- Colorful painting in black and white... page 2
- Poetry as performance art... page 2
- College Collage by Brandon... page 3
- And much more!



Poetry/ Performance Art

A former staff writer submitted the following poem. We liked it, but we pointed out a lack of punctuation.

"— that," he responded.

"Well, there is a typo or something in the first line," we shot back.

"Well, change it then," he said surily.

"— that," we shot back.

"Poetry's all in the inspiration of the moment," he said smiling.

Maybe he's right.

"So we're going to put it in just as it is—as performance art," we said.

"Cool," he said, walking away.

Walter

To long have I awakened
to do
to suffer
only to realize
everything that can be accomplished
will end

Remembrance, a true immortal
what has been done
what will be done
will end.

Time, all day long
fast turned to broken
emotion to concrete
Follow until the end.

Change the hope for all
Lies the only truth
No matter
You wear this well too
and it will end

Robert Mitz
[Signature]

Hypochondriac

which ill does this warrant
cries of staunch insincerity
lies, end to end, leaving
traces of truth
scattered bones of good humor

which pill makes you dormant
to "why's" of longing inquiry
your means and ends sheathing
pages of you
whether lone or in number

you hide behind your
pastel green hospital curtain
this wall of isolation
becomes your version of separation.

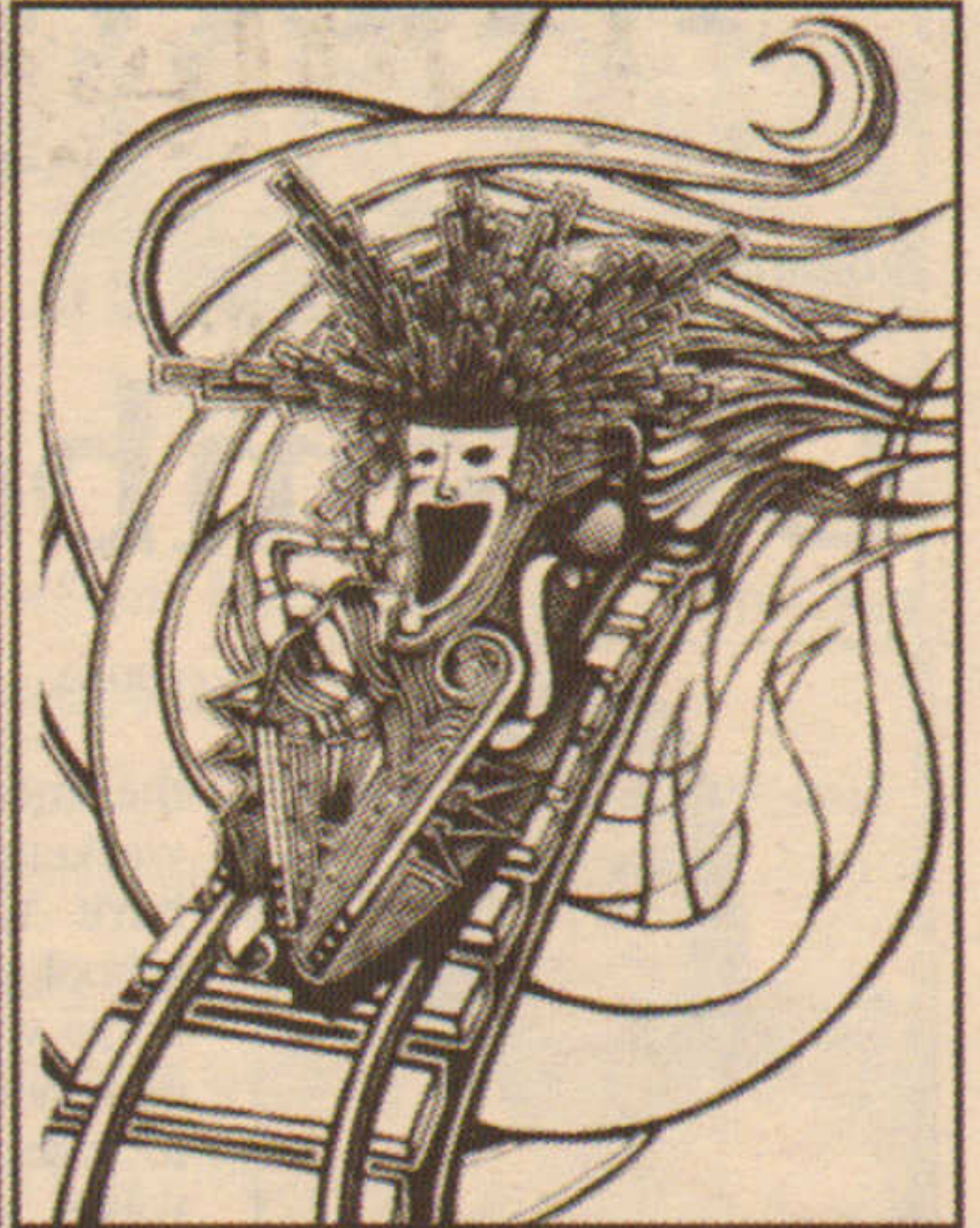
—Ben Crofford



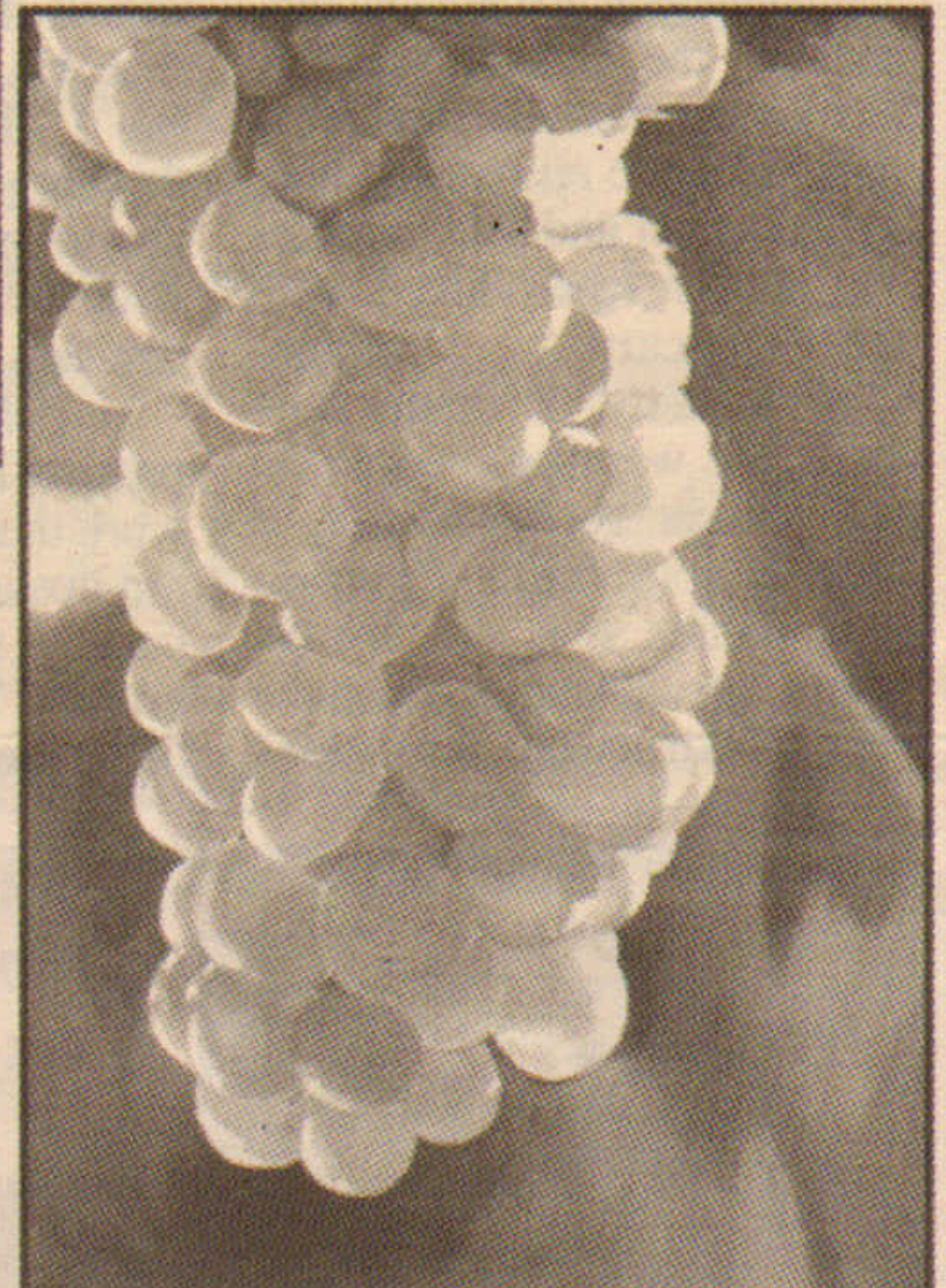
Painting by Candace Marshall
oil on canvas



Painting by Laura Libscomb



Pen and ink drawing
By Adam Lucas



Painting by Petricia Yang
oil on canvas



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The *Shelton State Courier* is a campus newspaper, written and produced with the help of students.

Among other functions, it is intended as a vehicle for student expression, and all students are urged to participate with submissions of written and artistic material.

The college seeks to fulfill the statement for academic

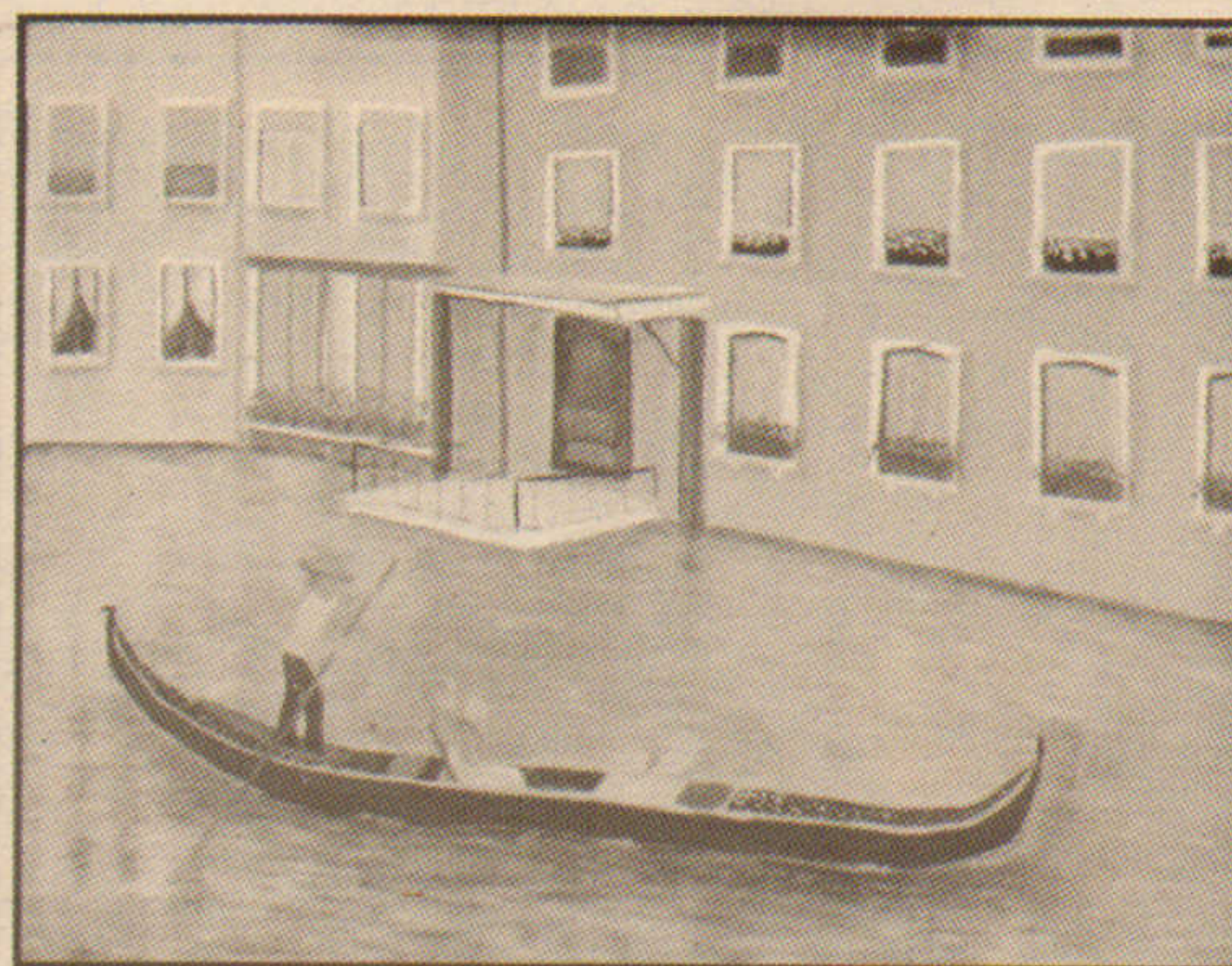
freedom in working with the students in the production of this paper.

All publications are subject to review by the Publications Action Group, which has been delegated the responsibility to review all college publications for content and accuracy.

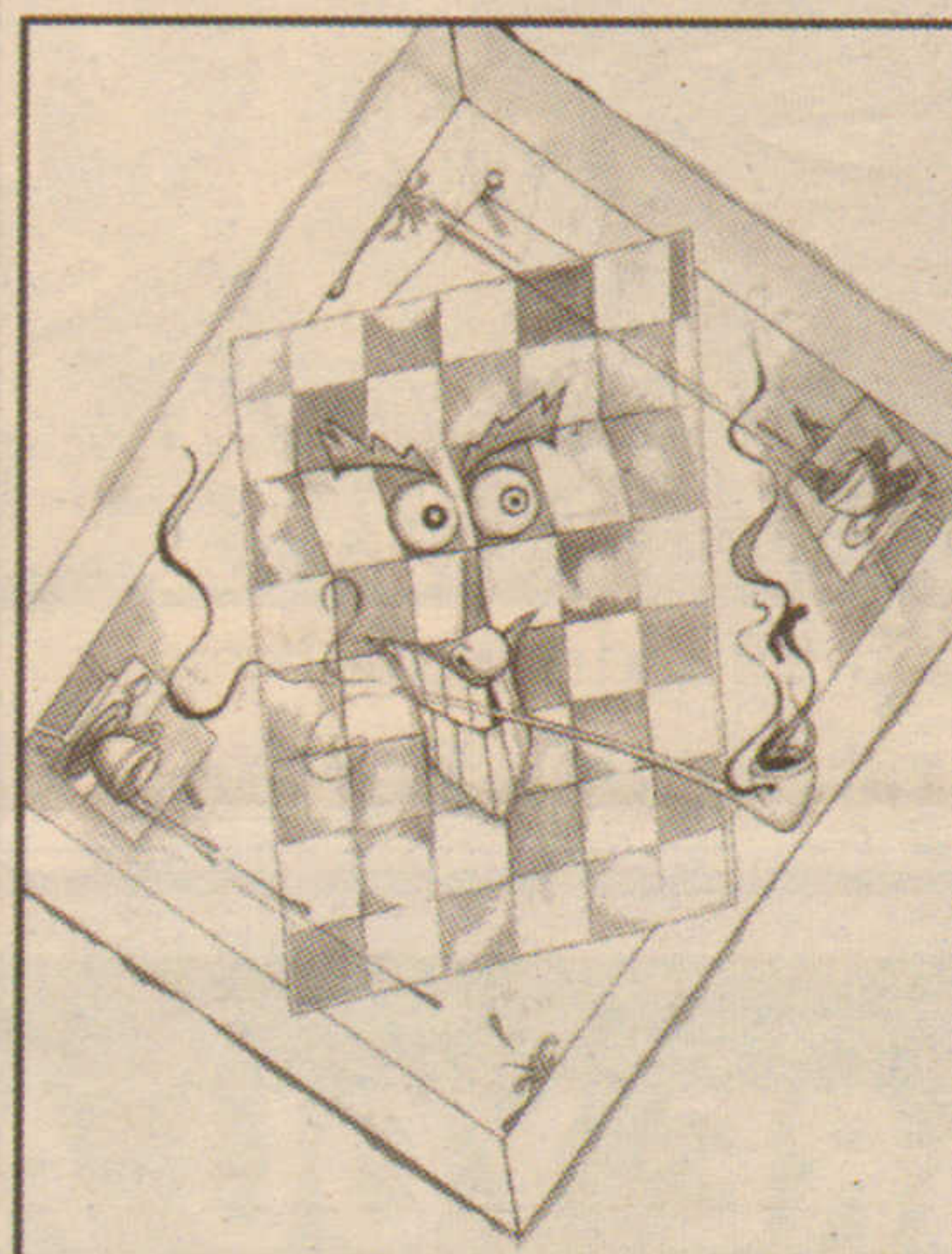
The *Courier* is an equal opportunity employer and student organization. All students are encouraged to participate.

College Collage

Photos by Brandon Lovett



Painting by Carrel Anderson
oil on canvas



Graphite
and ink
drawing

by
**Adam
Lucas**

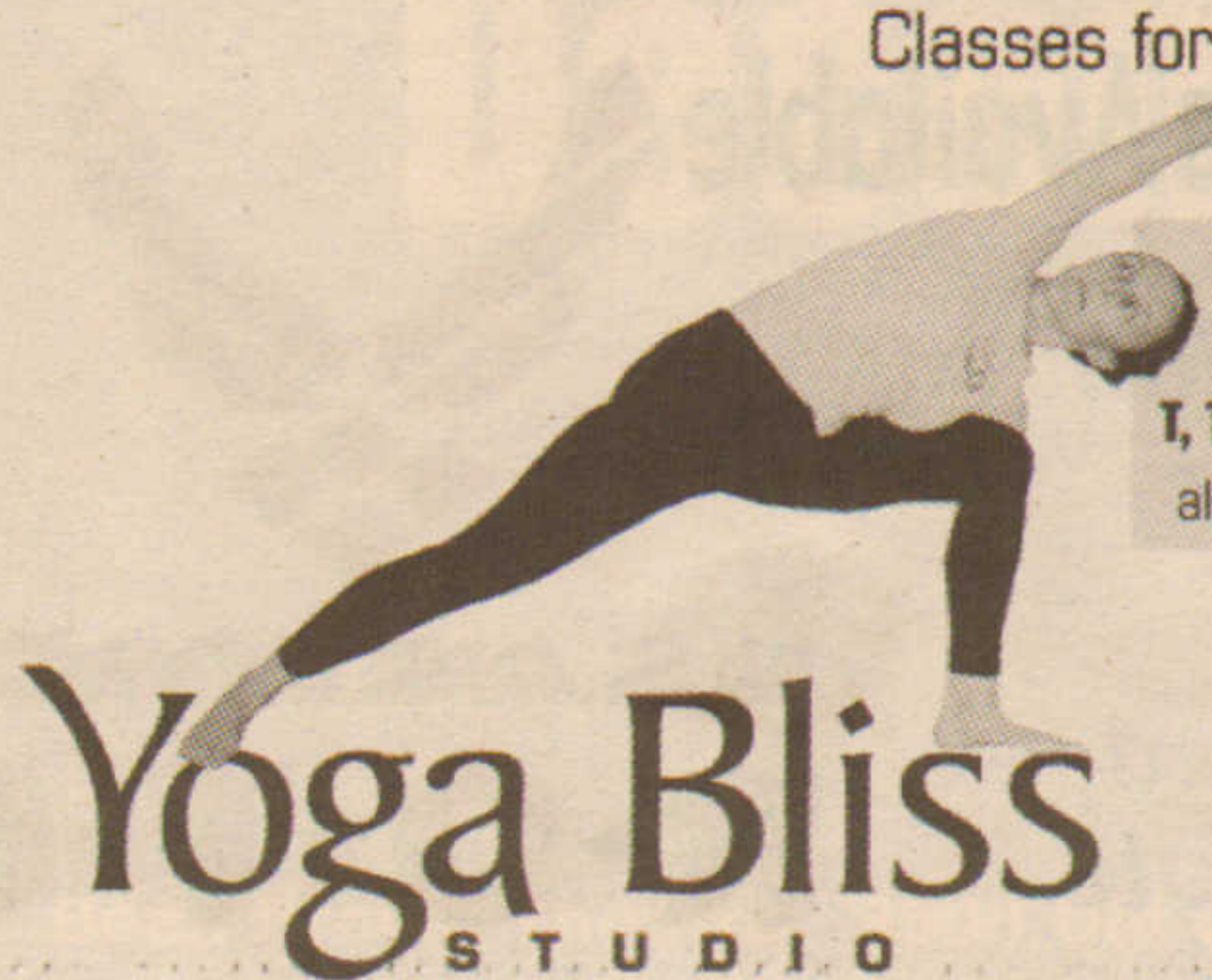
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Pen and ink drawing by
Laura Francis Porter



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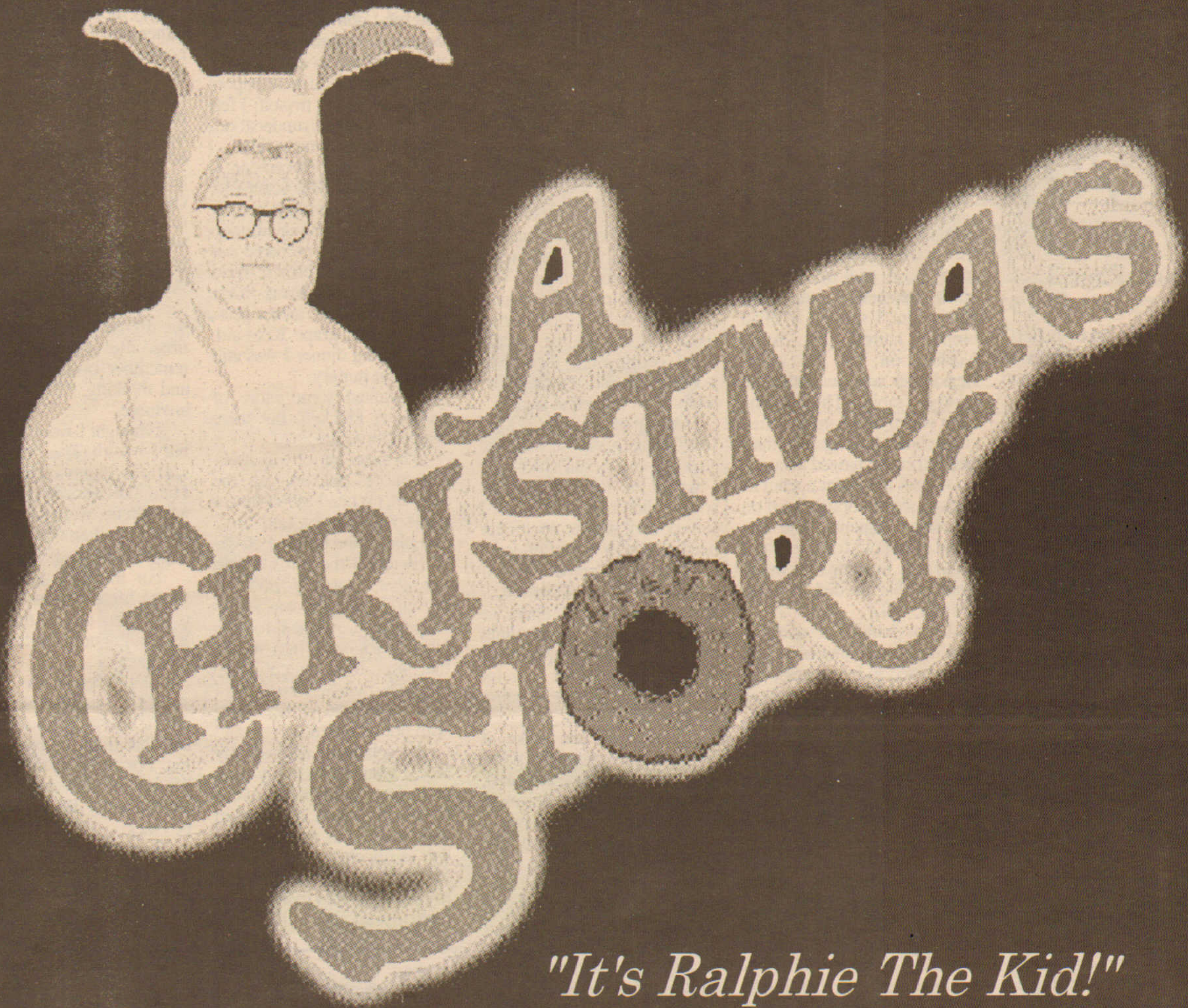
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Drawing
by
**Adam
Lucas**
pen and ink



2000 From Page 1

County. Please take shelter!" proclaimed the broadcaster. A few co-workers and I listened carefully.

"A tornado is now on the ground in Tuscaloosa, please take cover immediately!"

We ran down the corridor to the ICU waiting area where we would have a clear view of the storm. I was out of breath and my heart was racing. We stood there in amazement.

Black clouds were swirling and gathering momentum to form a powerful monster. Debris was flying about the twister and I couldn't help but think that those were the remains of a family's home along with probably everything else that they owned. The tornado appeared so close; it wasn't until later I learned how far away it really was.

When the spiral force of nature vanished, the sounds of police sirens and ambulances filled the air. People began flocking to the emergency room to be treated for their injuries.

I was called down to the ER where the trauma bay was located. My mind could not prepare me for the horror I was about to see. Our local

hospital looked like a scene from a television show. People were lined wall to wall on black stretchers. I entered the bay where I spotted a small blonde haired girl being worked on by the team. Beside her was her father on another table. The trauma team was trying hard to resuscitate him, but against their best efforts he passed away.

Across the room a team of doctors were working hard on two other patients. The bay could only hold four people; I could only imagine how many other people needed to be in there as well.

I was handed a stack of cartridges that contained films that needed to be processed. I carried them down the hall to ER radiology.

As I walked through the door I realized they were as busy as the trauma bay. My heart ached as I saw a little boy with a limb sticking out of his throat.

These people were in desperate need of help. I grabbed the films and ran them back to the bay. The little blonde haired girl was still unconscious and bleeding from several large gashes on her fragile little body. She had a younger brother, I later learned, that was missing; he was found a few days later under some debris. He didn't survive.

I felt so helpless because I

was not educated enough to help those people. I had never been to nursing school, I was only a clerk trained to process films and help doctors locate those films. I wanted to help these people, but there was nothing I could do. So I did what I was trained to do.

My stomach was aching from hunger, my knees were shaking, and it didn't look like I would be leaving anytime soon. I didn't leave at three; I stayed until I was no longer needed, which was after dark.

I learned to prepare myself for the worst of situations. I always want to think ahead so that I can deal with anything life throws at me. In spite of all my efforts, people cannot always predict what is going to happen.

Catastrophe can strike at any time; and as much as we like to think we have prepared, one can not always be ready for the loss of a loved one. I saw the damage tornadoes can cause first hand.

I watched on the news how two-hundred-thousand-dollar houses were blown apart as if they were made from straw. My heart goes out to all of the families who were injured or lost loved ones.

What was once a special program on the weather channel now holds a vivid place in my mind. That day will forever be in my heart.

Finding From Page 1

like "Black Shadow." Those hateful, demeaning words would go straight to my soul, which led me to dislike other black people, and most importantly, not liking myself. I felt all alone and misunderstood, and this caused me to rebel.

I remember December 3, 1970. I was five years old, and it was around 6 p.m.; my family was having dinner. My mother had prepared her famous golden-brown fried chicken, with home-made mashed potatoes, sweet peas, biscuits, and grape Kool-aid. After eating dinner I was still a little bit hungry.

I wanted some more of that tasty chicken, but there was no more prepared.

My sister Janice was cooking more chicken in the kitchen. (When I asked her for another piece, she said "no," and placed the bowl of chicken on top of the stove.) I told her that I would cook it myself, while she was walking away. I reached for the large black cast iron skillet that was used to cook the chicken. Before I knew it, I had pulled the skillet filled with hot oil down.

I splattered all over my face, easing down to my neck and chest, taking every piece of skin in its path. All the skin was gone from my face and half of my chest.

The grace of God spared my young eyes. I then walked into my mother's bedroom

with both hands over my face.

When my hands came down my mother was so taken with emotion that the only thing she could do was cry.

My mother then called my father, and I was taken to the hospital emergency room for treatment.

The doctors could not believe that I was not blinded by such a devastating accident. I remember the doctor saying it's an absolute miracle. The next morning I was released from the hospital, and my parents took me home. My mother had a clean bed waiting just for me.

When my mother let me see my face for the very first time after being burned, I remember opening my eyes and thinking, "I'm not black anymore."

I thought I would be upset but I wasn't. The first thing I said was, "I am a white man." I said that over and over again. My parents were taken aback at first but then they were just happy that I wasn't sad.

For the first time in my young life everyone was nice to me. That day all the neighbors in the neighborhood visited me.

People gave me money and gifts. I had people tell me that I was a special person, and that they are praying for me. For the first time in my life no one called me names, and I actually did feel proud to be black.

Sometimes it takes an accident or life shattering event to help us find ourselves.

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Bid Me To Come

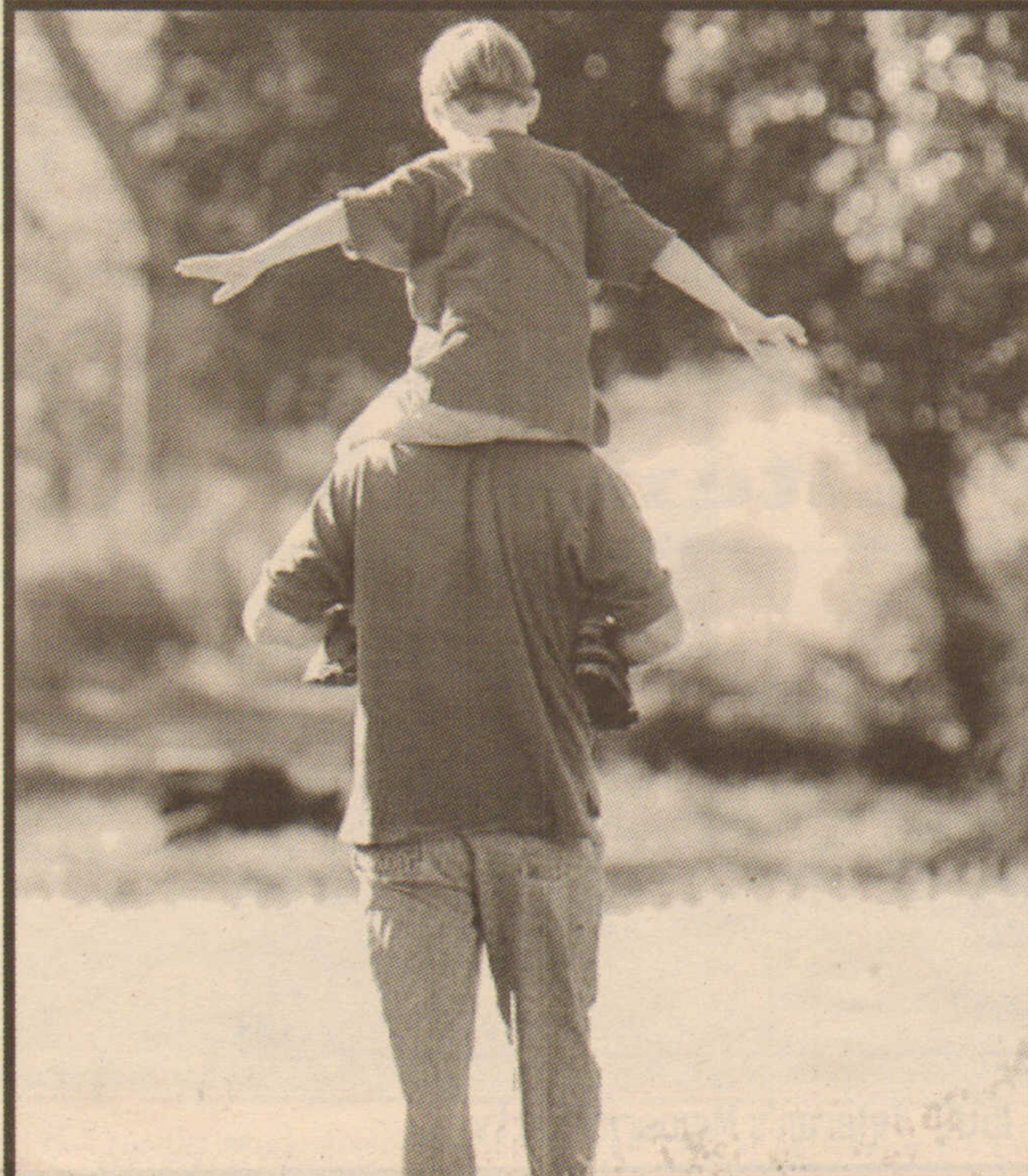
Lord bid me to come, And please grant unto me To keep me eyes upon you And not the raging sea.	Not the flesh of man. Yes, it's not just a mira- cle I want to see. But annointed for serv- ice I want to be.	I want to be. Through Christ I'm made Holy, But I do have a part The renewing of my mind And a circumcised heart.
For it's not just a mira- cle I want to see. But a part of the miracle I want to be.	For it is Christ in me To will and to do And the glory that comes Belongs only to you.	Lord it's not just a mira- cle I want to see But a full yielded vessel I want to be.
Lord bid me to come. And give me the grace To seek not mine own glory. But only your face.	It's not just a miracle I want to see But a channel for mira- cles I want to be.	May I earnestly desire And seek from above The greatest of gifts--- To give others <i>your</i> love.
For it's not just a mira- cle I want to see. But in the flow of your blessings I want to be.	We are given much power By your Holy Ghost To be your witnesses here And earth's parts uttermost.	It's not just a miracle I want to see, But your hope of glory I want to be---
Lord you made me Holy And I know it's your plan. That I walk in the Spirit	It's not just a miracle I want to see But your humble ser- vant	Yes, the ultimate mira- cle, which is <i>Christ In</i> <i>Me.</i>

—Earnest Metcalf

"Graduation, This Special Day!"

Graduation, this special day,
It's almost like a great holiday,
If a survey was taken concerning graduation day,
This is what many would say!
You've finally made it, through the heartaches, pain,
Frustration, long hours, long days and now strength you'll gain.
This day is full of excitement and fun,
And a day to reflect back at how you were always on the run.
Always on the run, in the books,
At home, in school, but realizing this is what it took.
Your dedication, through every situation,
On every level, it took your participation,
Always yielding to effective communication,
Understanding that someday God will use what you've learned,
To reach this nation.
Your patience through the years,
Hard work through the tears,
Dedication through the fears,
Has brought you to this place,
Oh yea! Don't let me forget to mention that it also took God's
grace.
You've reached this milestone, one of your many goals.
I pray that God will fulfill your dreams according to his will
And make them whole.
Those are just a few things, the survey did say,
About this great time,
"Graduation, this special day."

—Otha Gladney-Isaac



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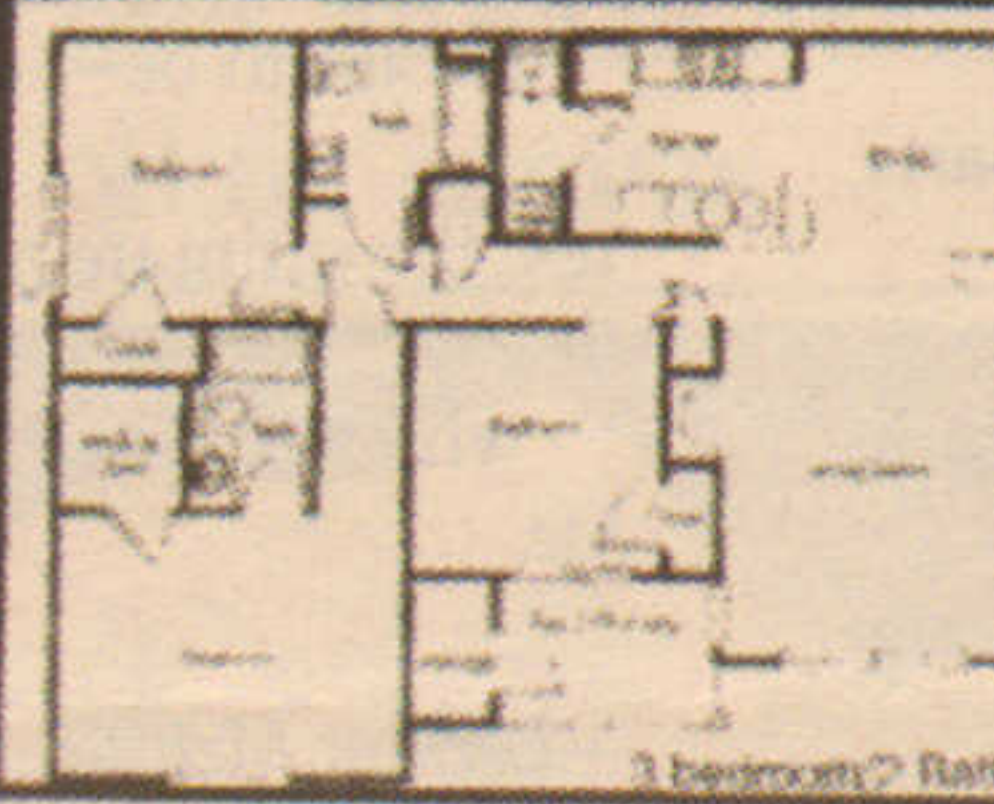
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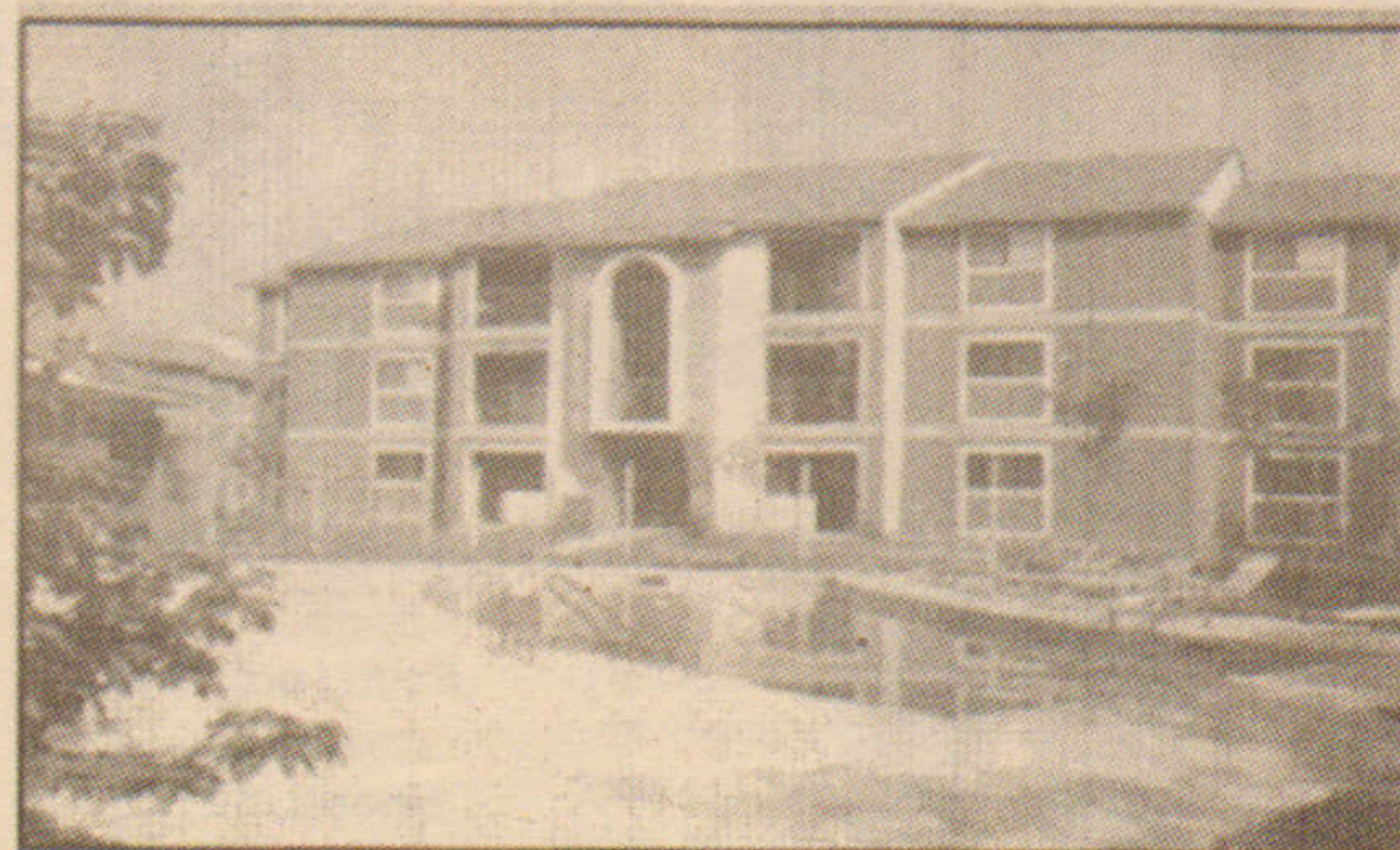
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